

April 5, 1984

LB 561

Carolina. In 1977, North Carolina put through a bill similar to this, and since then there have been 210 documented cases of substandard care by optometrists, care that has resulted in loss of vision, care that has resulted in serious eye problems for the citizens of North Carolina. And if you allow this bill to go through here, you are going to invite documented cases five, ten years from now due to the substandard care that is likely to be rendered as a result of this. Now let me make final comments about this turf fight issue. Now Senator Johnson says that is just a way of demeaning the legitimate issues that are involved here. I mean this is far more than a turf fight. If a group of attorneys were to bring a bill in that would allow us to design and build bridges, why it should be killed in committee and it would be killed in committee, and we wouldn't say, let's not get in the middle of this turf fight between the lawyers and the engineers. We would say, let's do what is in the public's interest and let's protect the public and let's kill that kind of a bill. Now don't be misled by this turf fight kind of language because there are extremely important underlying issues that are at work here. We are opening the door to treatment by nonphysicians, nonmedical school graduates to very serious kinds of eye diseases when there is plenty of primary care, medical care availability out there in the rural areas. I would urge you to vote against this bill. Thank you.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator DeCamp.

SENATOR DECAMP: Mr. President and members, Senator...could you whack the gavel?

SPEAKER NICHOL: (Gavel) May we have it a little softer so we can hear the speakers. Thank you.

SENATOR DECAMP: Mr. President, Senator Johnson said something and it is the theme of my rebuttal, I think. He said when I was a little boy, I went to the ophthalmologist, had to go a whole day's ride or whatever. Well, Senator Johnson and I were both little boys, he was just a couple of years older, and about the same time and place, up in northeast Nebraska, and indeed he is right, and back in

11800